



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

BC

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/662,958	09/15/2000	Ganesh Mani	284355-00003-1	3030
7590	10/10/2003			EXAMINER
David C Jenkins				LE, DAVID Q
Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellot LLC				
600 Grant Street				
44th Floor				
Pittsburgh, PA 15219				
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3621	
				DATE MAILED: 10/10/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/662,958	MANI, GANESH
	Examiner	Art Unit
	David Q Le	3621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 September 2000.

2a) This action is **FINAL**.                    2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

4) Claim(s) 1-89 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 33-51 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-32 and 52-89 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 15 September 2000 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some \* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Drawings*

1. The drawings are objected to because the margins of Fig 1 are too narrow and will not allow for proper reproduction.. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

### *Claim Objections*

2. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informality: the letter "A" at the beginning of claim should be capitalized. Appropriate correction is required.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101*

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claims 1-32 and 52-89 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter:

Claim 1 is directed to a method that does not result in a concrete product.

Claim 52 is directed to a system with instructions that bring about a method and therefore non-statutory.

Claim 71 seems is directed to a transmission medium or a signal, also a non-statutory subject matter.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:  
The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
6. Claims 52 and 71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

**As per claim 52.**

It is not clear whether the claimed invention is a system or software instructions stored on a data storage medium. The claim language is indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

**As per claim 71.**

It is not clear how a data transmission medium may "contain" instructions. The claim's language is indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

7. Claims 33-51 are allowed over the prior art.

Art Unit: 3621

8. As allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant's reply must either comply with all formal requirements or specifically traverse each requirement not complied with. See 37 CFR 1.111(b) and MPEP § 707.07(a).

Prosecution on the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for reply to this action is set to expire **TWO MONTHS** from the mailing date of this letter.

9. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the closest prior art Examiner has found to the claimed invention is Walker et al., US Patent No. 5,862,223 (Jan 19, 1999). The Walker invention is directed to an online expert-based service and support system and method; however Walker fails to teach or fairly suggest the establishment of user agents over a communications network, negotiating contracts between users and their selected agents according to clear terms and conditions, and the consummation of those contracts with payment methods also clearly defined.

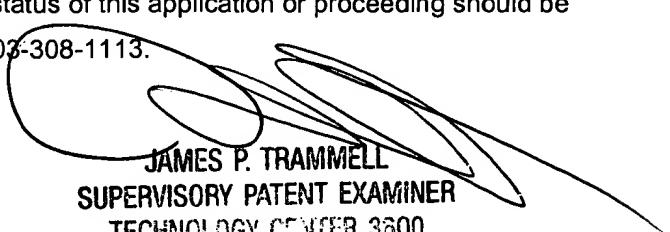
### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Q Le whose telephone number is 703-305-4567. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30am-5:30pm Mo-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James P Trammell can be reached on 703-305-9768. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

DQL

  
JAMES P. TRAMMELL  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600